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PROGRESS IN ANTHROPOLOGY AT PEABODY MUSEUM, YALE UNIVERSITY

By GEORGE GRANT MAC CURDY

In a review of anthropology at Yale University Museum as it is, one is unconsciously led to ask what it might have been had the late Prof. O. C. Marsh chosen that subject instead of paleontology for special research, and it once looked as if he might have done so. One of his earliest scientific papers, *Description of an Ancient Sepulchral Mound near Newark, Ohio*,¹ made its appearance in 1866, the year his official connection with Yale College began. The contents of that Ohio mound became the nucleus of an anthropological collection that has grown slowly but constantly ever since. But Professor Marsh soon became so absorbed in paleontological research that his interest in anthropology continued to manifest itself in collecting only. He had time neither to study the materials gathered nor to make a systematic exhibit of them.

The work of installation along definite lines was begun in the spring of 1899, soon after Professor Marsh's death. A series representing the Paleolithic period of Europe was the first to be taken up, the arrangement being in conformity with de Mortillet's system of relative chronology.² This was followed by the Swiss Lake-dwelling collection and an unusually fine Scandinavian neolithic series, the latter being classified in accordance with the latest work by Sophus Müller of Copenhagen.³

Last year was devoted to Egypt, Greenland, and Alaska. Judge Victor C. Barringer, during a long residence in Egypt, made a large collection of antiquities which were first deposited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, and later (1890) were bought for the Yale Museum. Part of this collection, with the recent annual accessions from the Egypt Exploration Fund, have been placed on exhibition. For the Greenland exhibit the Museum

¹*American Journal of Science*, vol. 42, pp. 1-11.

²*Le Préhistorique*, Paris, 1900.

³*Nordische Alterthumskunde*, Strassburg, 1897.

is indebted to Mr Benjamin Hoppin, Yale '72. One of its features is a mounted Eskimo figure, prepared by Mr H. W. Hendley, under the supervision of Prof. W. H. Holmes, of the United States National Museum. The most prominent features of the Alaskan exhibit are two large wooden totemic figures, one of a bear from the ridge-pole of a Tongass dwelling, and the other of a raven, heron, or kingfisher which marked the site of a Tongass shaman's grave. They were given to the Museum by Dr Wesley R. Coe, of Yale, who collected them while a member of the Harri-man Alaska Expedition. These exhibits, together with a considerable amount of miscellaneous labeling, represent what was accomplished in the way of installation during the three years ending June 30, 1902.

But the chief purpose of this paper is to record the progress of anthropology at the Museum since last June. This progress has been along the line (1) of accessions, including field-work, and (2) of installations. The accessions come under the head of purchases, gifts, and loan collections. Some field work was done in two different parts of the state. Through information furnished by the Reverend Heber H. Beadle, of Bridgeton, New Jersey, an archeological reconnoissance of a portion of the Farmington river valley, lying to the north and to the south of New Hartford, was undertaken early in the autumn. There are outcrops of a rather coarse, fibrous steatite or soapstone on the farms of Henry C. Butler, Lucas H. Mason, and G. C. Beckwith, in the Nepaug valley, about three miles south of New Hartford. Mr Mason, who acted as our guide, had recently found a number of worked blocks of soapstone, one of which had been transported and set up in front of his house. This latter measures between three and four feet long, a foot or more wide, and somewhat less than two feet in height, with deep, parallel, transverse incisions and the beginnings of one or two longitudinal grooves. These were evidently the first steps toward blocking out soapstone vessels.

On the stone wall in front of Mr Butler's farmhouse there is another, somewhat smaller, block of carved steatite, which was found on the ridge to the east of the farmhouse and not far from where the block mentioned above came. This is the rough draft of

a statue. On the head, which is slightly differentiated from the body by a circumferential groove, there are traces of human features—eyes, nose, mouth, and chin—produced by simple engraving. When doubt was expressed as to the authenticity of these scratches, Mr Mason emphatically asserted that they were found on the block when it was uncovered.

Mr Mason recently exposed the worked surface of either a soapstone boulder or outcrop near the top of the ridge already mentioned, and not far from the southern boundary of land belonging to Mr Butler. The quarries of the Connecticut Asbestos Mining Company are located on the same tract of land.

Two visits were made to the Nepaug locality, the first in company with Prof. C. E. Beecher and Dr Geo. F. Eaton, both of Yale University Museum, and the second in company with Dr Eaton only. Mr Mason, who was our guide the second time also, took us to a soapstone ledge which he discovered last spring on the land of Mr Beckwith. This ledge lies just west of a little stream which separates it from the ridge where the carved blocks of soapstone were found, and which flows in a southerly direction for about a mile, emptying into the Nepaug after crossing the Collinsville road just above Mr Beckwith's house. The outcrop has an almost north-and-south strike, and a dip of about 45° to the west. Its southern projection is completely denuded, and stands ten or twelve feet above the surrounding level. To the northward it disappears beneath a rising surface. The deposit has a laminated structure, and that the aboriginal workmen took advantage of this is seen in the flat-topped stumps or scars in the centers of bowl-shaped depressions which contained the incipient vessels until severed from the parent ledge. Two such markings were already exposed, and the upper portions of two more were visible above the layer of earth at the base of the ledge. Removing this layer we came upon a deposit of soapstone chippings reduced to the fineness of sawdust, buried in which were angular fragments of large quartzite pebbles. A depression in the top of the ledge, immediately to the north of its exposed portion, was partly filled with earth and leaves, and was apparently produced by the removal of many cubic yards of the soapstone. Displacing this earth-covering, we soon exposed half

a dozen vessel-scars of various shapes and sizes. Mr Beckwith has promised to protect the ledge as long as it remains in his possession. We found no vessels at that point, but were so fortunate as to secure a perfect one, which had been discovered about a foot below the bed of a small brook by R. R. Royce, a workman in the employ of Mr Beckwith, while excavating for a milk-house. The spot where the vessel was found is not more than a mile from the ledge.

Steatite ledges and boulders also occur some two or three miles north of New Hartford, and near the village of Pleasant Valley. Walter E. Manchester, of Pleasant Valley, conducted us to a large worked boulder by the roadside, a short distance south of the village green. He also took us to a rock-shelter, which had been discovered two years ago by F. J. Daniels, within the town limits of Barkhamsted, on land belonging to Alvin Stewart. This shelter, which is formed by an outcrop of gneiss, is on the southern slope of a high hill, and faces the south. Its floor was excavated to a depth of twenty inches or more by Mr Manchester, who found several hundred specimens, many of them broken, consisting chiefly of fragments of soapstone dishes, stone implements used in quarrying soapstone, drills, arrowpoints, pottery fragments of both plain and decorated ware, broken deer bones, and charcoal. Mr Manchester has given the entire collection to the Yale Museum. There is a thin seam of steatite which outcrops in the shelter where the floor and ceiling meet, but it was probably not thick enough to admit of profitable exploitation. It is about half a mile from the shelter to the nearest outcrops of steatite in any considerable quantity, although there are plenty of drift boulders of steatite not more than a hundred yards away.

A rock-shelter in another part of Connecticut was also visited, this time in company with Mr Alfred E. Hammer, of Branford. The shelter is less than a mile southwest of North Guilford, and the discovery that it contained Indian antiquities was made by Mr Lane while seeking cover there from a heavy rain-storm. Mr Lane's attention was first attracted to the blackness of the earth beneath his feet, and the thought occurred to him of transporting it to enrich his flower-beds. In ascertaining the depth of the black deposit he turned up flint implements. A later and somewhat

thorough exploitation of the shelter netted results in the uncovering by Mr Lane of six or seven hundred stone implements, most of which are now in Mr Hammer's private collection. No pottery was found. The shelter is formed in and under a bed of coarse sandstone conglomerate with a very gentle dip to the east and a north-and-south strike. It is perfectly dry and commodious, being from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet long, five to fourteen feet high, and with an average depth of about ten feet. It faces westward, of course, and looks through woodland out upon a brook of clear, cold water not more than fifty yards away. An old Indian trail passes within a few feet of its northern extremity.

It will be possible to enumerate only the more important accessions received since last June :

The Misses Terry, of New Haven, have deposited in the Museum an elaborate beaded ceremonial shirt of buckskin, presented to their brother, General Alfred H. Terry, by a Sioux chief.

This year's annual gift of Egyptian antiquities from the " Egypt Exploration Fund " comes from two well-known localities, Abydos and Fayum, and will soon be added to the previous gifts from the Fund already on exhibition. One hundred flint implements belong to the prehistoric period ; the other objects from Abydos range in point of historic sequence from the first to the thirtieth dynasty. The series from Fayum belong to the Græco-Roman period.

Mrs Kate Foote Coe and her sister, Mrs E. H. Jenkins, of New Haven, have given two valuable Chilcat blankets. Both blankets were collected in 1886 by Mrs Coe, one being obtained from a receptacle in the top of a totem pole on the island of Killisnoo, southern Alaska. When found it was wrapped about the bones and ashes of a cremated body. In addition Mrs Coe and Mrs Jenkins have lent to the Museum nine baskets : one Japanese from the island of Nippon, the others from Alaska and California Indian tribes.

The most important accession of recent years is the loan collection of Indian basketry and other ethnological specimens belonging to Mr and Mrs William Hamilton Moseley, of New Haven. Mr and Mrs Moseley began collecting on one of their early visits to the far west, and have since traveled extensively in western United States and

in Mexico, British Columbia, and Alaska. Some of their specimens were obtained for them through trained ethnologists; the result is a collection of unusual scientific value, representing almost every basket-making tribe from the Aleutian islands to Tehuantepec, besides many tribes of the interior. Nor was their collecting limited wholly to basketry, although more than two hundred of the three hundred specimens come under that head. A majority of objects other than baskets are from Alaska. Among these, two Chilcat blankets and a war knife deserve special mention. One of the blankets and the war knife were obtained for Mr and Mrs Moseley by Lieut. G. T. Emmons. The Moseley collection is already installed in new and suitable cases.

This represents in outline the recent progress of anthropology at the Yale Museum — progress made without the aid of any fund whatever. Even a small fund could be made to go far toward defraying the necessary expenses of care and maintenance, encouraging at the same time new gifts and loans of specimens. A larger fund would render possible the harmonious development of the whole collection by enabling the curator to conduct field explorations and, as exceptional opportunities occur, to make purchases of specimens. As long as he lived Professor Marsh spent his money freely toward increasing the anthropological collection. This financial support, which, of course, stopped with his death, no one else has assumed. Nevertheless, the annual accessions have increased in number since then. By accession is meant the number of specimens received at one time; it may be one, or it may be hundreds, and even thousands. During the four years ending with Professor Marsh's death there were 23 accessions to the anthropological collection. Within the four years that have since elapsed, there have been 63 accessions. In other words, almost as many accessions are received in one year now as were received in four years prior to 1899. There is every reason to suppose that, with a fund, or even with a regular patron, the increase would be much greater than it is. Under the circumstances, we can attribute the recent "Progress in Anthropology at Peabody Museum" to the gradual increase of general interest in the subject, an interest which, if properly fostered, will make itself felt even more in the future.